THE

BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

VOL. XX. WEDNESDAY, JULY 3, 1839. No. 21.

BILIOUS COMPLAINTS.*

THIS is one of the most sensible productions we have met with for a long time, and is, in our opinion, calculated to do much good, not only to the innumerable lay dabblers in physic, who come within the class of "bilious," but to the grave professors of legitimate medicine themselves. It is written in an accurate and pure style, and the whole of the argument is so clearly placed before the reader, and is so logically and forcibly reasoned throughout, that it cannot fail to produce a decided effect on the mind of every sensible and unprejudiced man. The great object which the author has in view is "to show that the habitual use of purgatives is injurious to health, and that the diseases commonly denominated nervous and bilious cannot be cured by these medicines, nor indeed by any medicines whatever, but solely by avoiding the causes from which these diseases spring;" and it would appear from his preface that, on this account, he has been accused of a desire to depreciate medicines and the art of medicine. We, however, entirely acquit him from such a charge; being thoroughly convinced that the true interests of the medical profession can never suffer from enlightened attempts to instruct the public on the subject of their health, and feeling, with the author, assured "that, in attempting to correct, as far as in his power, a great medical abuse, he is doing that which not only will not diminish, but on the contrary will increase and promote, a rational confidence in the healing art." It is not to writers like Dr. Henry, who come openly forward to disseminate the great truths of physic, without any self-interested motive, that the guardians of professional honor will ever seek to apply the lash, but to those base and dishonest men who, under the thin pretence of communicating information to the public, plot in reality how they may lure them into their toils.

In the first page of the dialogue, a vivid picture is drawn of the misery of a bilious or dyspeptic and nervous patient, and of the flattering but delusive and merely temporary relief afforded by purgatives; a picture, of which every physician will admit the truth, who has had much experience in such cases, and who knows the ordinary mode of treatment of them by routine practitioners or the patients themselves. After a complete exposure of the inadequacy and injurious effects of the purging

* A Dialogue between a Bilious Patient and a Physician. By James Henry, M.D., Fellow of the College of Physicians, Dublin. Third edition.—Dublin, 1839. 8vo., pp. 32.

practice, the author—in reply to his patient's objections that "the necessity for a purgative is sometimes so pressing that present relief must be sought for, regardless of future consequences;" and that "the sentence of condemnation cannot be pronounced against those mildly opening and alterative medicines which neither sicken nor gripe, but merely give a gentle stimulus to the bowels, and assist their natural action"—enters into an elaborate discussion to show that the established creed respecting the necessity of having a daily evacuation of a certain consistence and color is utterly false; it thus concludes—

"I have now shown you that your opinion, that it is necessary to good health that the stools should be brought, by the aid of purgatives, to agree with a certain assumed standard, either with respect to frequency, or color, or consistence, is opposed, 1st, by your own experience of the utter futility of all attempts to render your bowels more regular by the aid of purgative medicines. 2dly. By my medical experience of the same fact with respect to other persons. 3dly. By my medical experience that such attempts are not only futile but ruinous to the health. 4thly. By my medical experience of the great variety that obtains in the stools of healthy persons, both with respect to their number, color, and consistence; or, if I may so say, by my medical experience of the non-existence of a fixed standard for the stools. 5thly. By the principles of physiology, which show that the stools of healthy persons must of necessity vary, and cannot by possibility be reduced to a fixed standard." (p. 27.)

He accounts for the great popularity, or, we may indeed say, of the nearly universal use of purgative medicines, by the great immediate relief afforded by them, by the real or supposed facilities they furnish for the indulgence in luxurious habits, by the fear that constipation, if unchecked, may lead to dangerous results, by the influence of traditionary opinion, by the misapprehension of the advice of Locke given in his Essay on Education, and by the direct and most extended authority of the late Mr. Abernethy (the author might have added Dr. Hamilton), and by the great recommendation of the practice to British practitioners from its simplicity and facility, and its harmonizing so happily with the empirical and *effective* practice so long characteristic of medical practice in this country; and, finally, by the efforts of the host of pill-makers, called into existence by these potent and multifarious causes on the infallible principle of statistical economy that supply will follow demand. These last two causes are happily explained in the following passage:

"Under this system a careful and laborious investigation into the particular circumstances of each case was no longer necessary: well prepared with his purgatives, the physician was ready for every case which might occur. If he understood the case, he gave purgatives, because he was convinced that they were required; if he did not understand the case, or had not leisure, or inclination, or ability to investigate it, he still gave purgatives; and thus, if he did not cure, he at least purged the patient, and so avoided the appearance of not knowing what should be done, and of standing an idle and inactive spectator of the progress of

the disease. Thus were purgatives at one and the same time the offensive and defensive armor of the physician; the keen weapons with which he combated all diseases, and the secure coat of mail which covered his own ignorance, incapacity, or inattention. The practice of physicians to prescribe and recommend opening medicines, and the general use made of them by the public, produced of course a great demand for medicines of this class; the manufacture and sale of purgatives therefore became a profitable employment, and was carried on extensively by a great number of persons, who, deriving large incomes from the sale of their medicines, took infinite pains, by means of advertisements in all the newspapers and periodicals, and by agents in almost every town in the empire, to give notoriety and celebrity to their nostrums, and at the same time to keep up the credit of the purging system, on which the sale of their drugs, and of course their revenues, entirely depended." (page 35.)

Having convinced his patient of the groundlessness of the system of curing bilious complaints by purgatives, and of the utter inadequacy of these means to accomplish the end desired, the physician enters upon the exposition of his own *rational* system, which has the great merit of containing nothing that is novel, and nothing but what every experienced physician, who is accustomed to think and reason as well as to observe and prescribe, will admit the truth of. This system comprehends merely due attention to air, exercise and diet.

"Your symptoms having arisen from the inability of your stomach properly to digest your food, and air and exercise affording the natural, and certain, and well-known means of strengthening the stomach and increasing its digestive power, it follows that if your stomach is not (as I believe it is not) already injured beyond recovery, and if you are careful not to injure it in future, you have only to take sufficient exercise in the open air, in order to render your stomach equal to the digestion of your food, and so obtain the perfect recovery of your health. You have for many years lived an anxious, sedentary life; you have passed much of your time in close, badly-ventilated apartments, and have taken but little exercise or healthful recreation; you must change your habits in all these particulars; you must give less time to business and sedentary occupations, and more time to exercise and recreation in the open air. If your circumstances do not permit you to ride, or hunt, or shoot, or course, you can at least afford some time for quick walking: if the middle of the day is engaged, you can rise early and walk before breakfast; or, if that time also is devoted to business, you can take an hour's walk at night, just before bed-time; a practice quite free from danger to those who have not delicate lungs, and which has the advantage of warming the skin, and particularly the feet, before going to bed, and of composing and refreshing the mind after the fatigues and business of the day. . . If you are too timid to go out at night in bad weather, you can practise dancing, or fencing, or sparring, or some other gymnastic exercise at home; or you can play with young people or children at some of their cheerful games; or you can read for an hour in a loud voice, an exercise celebrated even among the Romans for the cure of

bilious diseases, but most unaccountably neglected in modern times, although it has not only the effect of strengthening the stomach and assisting the action of the bowels, but also of bracing the chest and lungs, and improving the organs of voice and articulation, while at the same time it affords you an opportunity of directly cultivating the mind itself." (p. 42.)

The patient objects that his business is such as to leave little leisure for either exercise or amusement: the physician combats the objection, on the principle that "a man can always find some time for what he is fond of," and insists on the possibility, nay certainty, of his being able to take advantage of "some one or more of the exercises and recreations enumerated." "If, however," he adds, "you are unfortunately so circumstanced that you cannot or will not put into practice any of the measures which I have mentioned, there is yet another method to which you may have recourse, and from which I can promise you very considerable benefit; a method, too, which is perfectly in your own power, and which does not involve any sacrifice of time or any expense." (p. 44.) This method is the due graduation of the ingesta to the powers of the stomach and the wants of the system; in other words, proper attention to diet.

"As you find it impracticable to take those measures which are necessary to render your stomach equal to the work which it has to do, give it less work; do with it as you do with a weak horse; when you cannot strengthen the horse so as to render him equal to the work, you diminish the work so as to render it equal to the strength of the horse; do the same with your stomach. . . . You cannot take the stomach of another person as a measure for your own. . . . One man will be filled, even to repletion, by a quantity of food scarcely sufficient to satisfy the cravings of another man's hunger. There is no rule so good, or so general in its application, as the feeling of the stomach itself; if, after a meal, you are light and cheerful, and without flatulence or acidity, you have not eaten too much; if, on the contrary, you are oppressed or flatulent, you have erred either in the quantity or the quality of the food taken. . . . You inform me that circumstances render it difficult for you to use the means necessary to strengthen the stomach; the conclusion is obvious, you must diminish the quantity of the food. By so doing you will relieve yourself from the bilious symptoms; you will be no longer troubled with flatulence, acidity, and oppression after meals; your tongue will become clean, your spirits light, and your stomach, being no longer required to do more than it is able to do, will gradually improve in tone and temper." (pp. 45, 46.)

It is, however, only the combination of these two, by the simultaneous employment of proper exercise and proper diet, that the rational and certain cure of the disease is to be effected. Either will fail singly; but the effect of both will be triumphant.

"But this method [that is, taking only as much food as the stomach can digest], although calculated to cure your bilious symptoms, is still an imperfect method; because your sedentary, anxious, careful life (the original cause of the disorder in your stomach) will still exert its inju-

rious influence, weakening and emaciating your muscles, shattering your nerves, and unfitting your stomach for the digestion of more than the smallest quantity of the plainest food. You will be improved, indeed, because your stomach will be able to digest the diminished quantity of food; but this quantity of food being too small to impart full strength and vigor to your frame, you will still be an invalid, although no longer bilious. If you wish your cure to be complete, combine the two methods judiciously together. While your stomach continues weak, give it less work; but in the mean time do not neglect the means necessary to restore its strength. As it grows stronger it will not only be able to do more work, but its work will be better done; it will digest its food better, and the food, digested better, will produce stronger muscle, bone, and sinew, by means of which you will be enabled to take an increased quantity of exercise without fatigue; the increased quantity of exercise will produce increased strength of stomach, and the increased strength of stomach increased strength of muscle, bone and sinew; and so the improvement will go on in a circle; your bilious symptoms will disappear as if they were charmed away; you will lose the fastidiousness of palate and capriciousness of appetite, which a disordered stomach always generates; and you will restore to your dietary, with safety and even with advantage, various articles of food which are at present excluded from it; the bloom of health will adorn your cheeks, and vigor of body will accompany and promote vigor of mind and serenity of temper." (pp. 46, 47.)

The patient, at length thoroughly convinced by the physician's arguments, takes his leave, promising to follow out in practice the principles laid down. This he does rigidly, and on his return, *after three months*, he announces his cure to be complete. He says, "I am a new man; you have been the means, under Providence, I will not say of saving my life, but (which is much more) of enabling me to enjoy it. The existence that was almost a burthen to me has become delightful, my mind and body are both at ease, and I am enabled to employ their energies for the advantage of my family and the good of my fellow-creatures." (p. 49.)

All this is excellent; and we venture to say that that physician will alone treat successfully the vast class of chronic diseases included under Dr. Henry's comprehensive title, who adopts and follows up the general principles of the practice recommended by him. We have been long convinced that the attempt to cure habitual biliousness or chronic indigestion by mere medicinal prescription is at least as hopeless as that of the homœopathists to cure acute diseases by their imaginary medicines; and we know of no more crying or perilous abuse in the practice of physic than the universal system of purgation followed by the routine practitioners of this country. Well may Dr. Henry call the British nation "the most purging nation in the world;" and we confess we should be proud to aid him in his laudable attempt to do away this reproach.

In admitting all this, we are by no means disposed to bestow unqualified approbation on Dr. Henry's system as here exposed; it is too nar-

row and exclusive; it contains some serious errors, both negative and positive, of omission and commission. He is decidedly too outrageous against the use of purgatives; his horror of them almost exceeds that of *Chanticleer* in Chaucer's Nun's Priest's Tale:

> "I say furthermore
> That I ne tell of laxatives no store,
> For they be venomous, I wot it well;
> I them defy;—I love them never a deal."

Now it is one thing to prescribe the habitual use of a remedy and to trust to it almost exclusively for the cure of a disease, and another thing to employ this remedy occasionally and under particular circumstances. So far from the use of an occasional purge being injurious in bilious disorders, it is the very reverse; and its employment in this manner does not in any way establish a necessity for its frequent repetition. Again, so far from proper aperients, even a course of them, being injurious in commencing the treatment of a bilious disorder of long standing, we hold them to be, in a majority of cases, essentially necessary, and necessary even to insure the success of the rational anti-medicinal system advocated by Dr. Henry. The regulated diet, the air, the exercise, will evince their beneficial operation much more speedily and beneficially after the intestinal canal has been freed from old accumulations, the torpid mucous membrane has been stimulated, the glandular emunctories unloaded and excited, the plethora of the portal system relieved; nay, we are convinced that, without these preliminary measures, the hygienic treatment will entirely fail in a certain class of cases. We wish it, however, to be distinctly understood that we regard this medicinal course as merely preliminary and temporary; for permanent benefit—for the cure, properly so called—we rely entirely, with Dr. Henry, on the rigid enforcement of hygienic measures. And here we think our author has taken too confined and exclusive a view of such measures, which has arisen from his regarding the morbid condition to be remedied as simpler than it really is. In cases of bilious disorder of long standing, almost the whole frame is implicated in all its organs and functions, in its solids and its fluids; and, in contemplating this wide and multifarious disorder, its seems, at first sight, not very likely that any one measure, however comprehensive in its operation, should be able to remedy so general an evil, but that the proper treatment should include as wide a range of agencies as can be effectively and safely applied. With this view, in addition to the air, exercise and diet of Dr. Henry, we would enforce the use of other auxiliary means calculated to improve the disordered functions, not even excluding therefrom mild alterative aperients; among these means we would lay particular stress on bathing, warm, tepid, or cold, general or local, according to the circumstances of the case; friction to the surface; rigid attention to the state of the mind; and such *medicinal* treatment as the aggravated affections of particular organs, which almost invariably ensue in protracted cases, seem to require. It would surely be absurd to trust to exercise and diet alone for the cure of an incipient gastritis, or congested liver, or overloaded colon, or turgid abdominal veins, when we had it in our power more speedily and effect-

ually to relieve these by the employment of leeches to the præcordia or anus; by the use of mild but effective purgations or injections; by a course of warm bathing; or even by a short course of gentle mercurials. We recommend these and other similar views to the consideration of Dr. Henry, and trust that he will not overlook their importance in preparing the next edition of his Dialogue for the press.—*British and Foreign Medical Review.*

"THE MINISTER'S AIL."

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

Sir,—One word more about this tobacco affair. I would not again have opened my mouth on the subject, if a gentleman had not been using my name in a late number of the Journal, and that, too, in a manner not the most advantageous to myself. However, if you will give me a little room, I will dispose of the gentleman and his arguments in short metre. I will, therefore, as the gentleman seems to take hold of the wrong end of everything he meddles with, begin with the end of his exceedingly *wise*, *instructive* and *entertaining* communication, and make a few short remarks on each of his paragraphs, from the end to the beginning, which concern myself.

In his last paragraph, the writer has made a most wonderful discovery; namely, that the sore throat is caused by speaking. Most surprising! But he has not only discovered the cause of the disease in question, but, lo and behold, he has invented a remedy for it! And what is this remedy? Why, it is leaving off speaking. Incredible! He has discovered that the vocal organs were not formed for speaking; that speaking gives men the sore throat, and that leaving off speaking is an infallible remedy for the disease.

Looking at the next paragraph, that is, going backwards, like the crab and the gentleman's reasoning, we find that he makes a formal inquiry why and wherefore, &c. Now, this question is beyond our comprehension; but we should imagine that the man who could discover that speaking gave men the sore throat, and that leaving off speaking would cure it, could certainly solve so simple a question as the one he has proposed.

But to go on. The gentleman thinks cold water extremely good for public speakers to take during the delivery of their discourses; and to prove this, he brings forward an array of argument that must surely make the world stare. But the gentleman gets into a sad quandary by giving us to understand that he does not know the difference between fatigue and fever. He most wisely concludes that the vocal organs are often in a state of fever during speaking. It is something which I have yet to learn, that we cannot use any or all of our organs actively, without bringing a fever upon those organs, so that, as the gentleman declares, they require cold water to cool them. I well know that when for a long time we use any of our organs, they become fatigued; but that they cannot be used without bringing fever upon them, is strange in-

deed. Then the gentleman has a remarkable remedy for the fatigued (not the fevered) organs; and that is, cold water. I would, without proceeding any further, just inform the gentleman, for his especial edification, that our organs are so formed that we may use them without inducing fever in them; that their long-continued use fatigues them; and for the especial edification and the more particular safety of his patients, I would just insinuate, in the most delicate manner possible, that cold water is not exactly the thing to be applied to a fatigued and exhausted organ, or to an exhausted patient. Not exactly the thing, did I say? Indeed, the very idea is monstrous and absurd! And what does the gentleman recommend, but this very thing? The application of cold water to the delicate organs of the voice, when, after excessive labor, they have become fatigued and exhausted!

In the next paragraph (a tergo proceeding), the gentleman says that he has spent much of his time in being instructed when *not* to give medicine. I thought this was the case from the perusal of his communication; for, from this I should judge that he had spent all his days in learning how and when not to perform his professional duties—or, in other words, that his whole life had been spent in being taught *ignorance*. For what is it but being taught ignorance to be instructed when and how *not* to do a thing? I would inform the gentleman, that being instructed when and how *not* to do a thing, is just no instruction at all. What instruction would it be to me for a man to tell me when or how *not* to perform a mathematical question? He again says, the disease in question is exclusively confined to clergymen. This discovery is all but equal to the remedy he discovered for sore throat, and is the farthest possible from the truth. Again he says, that ministers rarely take cold water during the delivery of their discourses. I would merely say to this, that his observation must have been extremely limited, and that the inference drawn from it is as false as the assertion which we have last considered.

I would merely state, in conclusion, that my opinion with regard to the injurious effects of cold water on the voice, when taken during public speaking, was an opinion of the moment, and given without much reflection on the subject; but having my attention again called to the subject by the late remarks in the Journal, I have reflected on it more closely, and the more I have reflected, the more I have become confirmed in that opinion. And I firmly believe that every rational man who will take the trouble to investigate the subject, and who does not, like the gentleman whose remarks we have been considering above, believe that our organs cannot be exercised without throwing them into a state of fever, will arrive at the same conclusion. N. H. Allen.

Gray, Me., June 19, 1839.

REMARKABLE EFFECTS OF CREOSOTE.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

Sir,—Having noticed some articles in your useful Journal upon the value of creosote, I take the liberty of reporting a case which has come

under my own observation, proving its value, and which, if you think proper, you may insert in the Journal.

Miss L. C., aged about thirty, of this city, called on me on the 19th of April last, for medical advice in relation to an indolent ulcer, situated about half way between the knee and ankle, four inches in length, and from one to one and a half in width. The greater part of the limb below the knee was very much swollen, attended with a good deal of inflammation, and was very sensible to the touch; the pain was variable, but much of the time severe. A viscid, tenacious and fetid discharge was kept up from the ulcer continually. In short, it had every appearance of being one of those troublesome ulcers which so often baffle the skill of the physician, and are thus pronounced incurable.

Having used creosote in somewhat similar cases before this, with the most happy effects, I was induced to try it in this, which I did in the following manner. R. Aq. font., ʒi.; creosote, gtt. x. This I applied to the ulcer and parts affected or swollen, every other day, with a cotton roller three inches broad, applied tightly from the toes to the knee. This, together with rest from labor, caused the ulcer to heal perfectly sound in five weeks, and the parts adjacent to put on a healthy and natural appearance; and it remains, as the patient herself terms it, "well."

Note.—This case had been of eleven years' standing, and had received many different kinds of treatment, without receiving much, if any, benefit. I should be inclined to give some of the credit of the cure to the bandaging, were it not that the bandages had been applied previously to no purpose. DAVID CRARY, M.D.

Hartford, Conn., June 24, 1839.

EXTRAORDINARY ABSTINENCE ATTENDING CHRONIC PERITONITIS.

TREATED BY DRS. MERRIMAN AND PLYMPTON, MADISON, OHIO.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

Miss M. D., daughter of the late Rev. Jonathan Winchester, of Ohio, died in February last in the 17th year of her age. Previous to her last sickness, she had suffered two attacks of mucous gastritis, both of which were severe, and of some weeks' continuance. From the first attack, which occurred four years ago, she began to complain, as we afterwards learned, of a circumscribed hardness of four or five inches in diameter, without much pain or soreness, situated a little superior and anterior to the crest of the left ilium, with inability to "lie straight in bed." To these symptoms, however, our attention was not called till after her second attack, which occurred two years ago. From this time she continued under medical treatment, more or less rigid, according to the urgency of her symptoms. As the details of treatment in this case would be uninteresting, we need only say, that the length of time she continued our patient afforded us an opportunity of exhausting all the resources of the healing art which we could derive, either from our own

experience or that of others. Alteratives and counter-irritation in all its varieties were rigidly and perseveringly tried.

During the time last referred to, she was seldom confined wholly to the house, but was able to discharge all the relations of a kind neighbor, in visiting the sick, during the autumnal fevers of last year, till the latter part of November. She was then, after having complained for some days of increased tenderness and hardness of the abdomen, suddenly seized with violent spasms, incessant vomiting and paroxysms of sinking, and seemed likely to live but a short time. The bowels were at first hard, with tympanitic distention, but afterwards wholly lost their elasticity and became very much sunken. During the first eight days, we were enabled to administer a little nourishment in the form of mucilaginous drinks, and also to procure cathartic operations, but not without the utmost difficulty. Small doses of calomel, so intimately combined with mucilage as to escape her notice, was the only form in which she could retain any cathartic medicine upon her stomach, even for the shortest period of time.

During the last nine weeks, we were unable to procure any alvine evacuations, or to administer food in any form whatever. Every species of aliment or medicine was invariably rejected, and pure ice water alone, sucked through an oaten straw, constituted her only medicine, food and beverage, through a period of more than sixty days; and during the last week she did not even take this. Enemata had been used for cathartic purposes, but her earnest entreaties prevented their ever being employed for the purposes of nutrition. Her intellectual powers continued unimpaired, with the exception of ten days. During this time she remained mostly in a state of rapturous delirium, passed three days and nights without sleep, and would often consume three or four hours together in her favorite employment of singing. This season of mental derangement was succeeded by a return of reason for the last four days, and she remained able to converse with her friends to her last moments.

This case affords a rare illustration of the self-sustaining powers of the human system, in certain cases, when deprived of its ordinary supports; especially if it be relieved of its usual expenditures. A hasty inspection, twenty-four hours after death, in the presence of a number of medical gentlemen, revealed no indications of disease, except in the abdominal viscera. The omentum was wholly consumed, except some ligamentous shreds firmly attached to the bowels. Numerous ligamentous bands were found confining the convolutions of the bowels to each other, and to the parietes of the abdomen; while the duodenum was immovably fixed, and so involved in an agglutinated mass embracing the pancreas, spleen, and a portion of the intestine, as to be with much difficulty traced. The mucous coat of the stomach was very much reddened throughout its surface, as was also the mucous coat of the bowels —but without ulceration. No part of the uterine or urinary apparatus exhibited marks of disease.

E. S. Plympton.

June 12, 1839.

CONGENITAL CATARACT.

OPERATION BY DIVISION, AND PERFECT RECOVERY OF SIGHT.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

Case.—Louisa, a colored child aged five years, living with Hiram Frayurd, three miles from Woodville, Miss. Health and constitution good; eyes presenting a full and natural appearance, with the exception of light-gray cataracts in both, intercepting entirely all vision. The bowels were opened with sulph. magnesia; the pupils well dilated with the ext. belladonna, and twenty drops tr. opii administered thirty minutes previous to the operation. The eyes had acquired great mobility, rendering a fixed position quite impossible. The operation of division was chosen as the one indicated, the cataracts being lenticular and of a gelatinous consistence. The eyes were operated upon at successive periods in the years 1837–8, with desired success. A solution of the ext. belladonna, gradually weakened, was applied night and morning for three days after the operation. No inflammation supervened requiring treatment, and in ten days all dressings were removed, as the eyes presented a healthy appearance. In about three weeks the pupils had resumed their natural size, and no appearance of the cataract remained. Since the recovery from the last operation up to this time, May, 1839, the eyes have been gradually improving. Mobility much lessened, and the muscles of the eye under the control of the will. She is now able to recognize small articles, pick beads from the floor, &c., and readily distinguishes colors and persons. Glasses have not yet been used, but will be resorted to, when vision, at a proper angle, will be perfect.

Woodville, Miss., June 2d, 1839. C. S. Magoun, M.D.*

ANATOMY OF CLUB-FOOT.

Although the malformations which are known under the popular denomination of club-foot are extremely frequent, and their treatment carried to a high degree of perfection, we possess but few accurate records of dissections of the affected limb. The following account of a case of talus, lately presented to the Royal Academy of Medicine by M. Bouvier, is therefore worthy of some attention:—

"It occurred in the person of a man, who died at the age of sixty-six years in the Hotel Dieu. The malformation had been developed in this individual when at the age of twelve months, and consisted in a forcible extension of the foot, by which the weight of the body was made to fall entirely on the heel. The angle which is formed by the axis of the foot with the leg, is sixty degrees, and the point of the foot is with great difficulty brought down so as to form a right angle. When this is done the tibialis anticus, extensor communis, and extensor proprius pollicis muscles, are thrown into a state of extreme tension. The integuments of the heel are thick and horny; those of the rest of the

* We shall be pleased to receive reports of the cases referred to by Dr. M. in his private letter. —Editor.

foot are fine and thin, showing that the heel had to bear the entire weight of the body. The os calcis is directed somewhat outwards; the whole foot also deviates outwards in a slight degree; the sole of the foot, instead of forming an arch, is nearly flat. The lateral peroneal muscles are shortened, but those which cover the back of the leg are elongated. The whole limb is remarkably wasted, the muscular fibres completely deprived of their color, and presenting that peculiar fatty appearance which so often occurs in cases of club-foot."

The operation of dividing the tendons, which has been practised with so much success in cases of children affected with club-foot, has never, we believe, been tried on a patient far advanced in life. It was, therefore, a matter of some interest to determine how far the malformation, in the present instance, might have admitted of remedy by surgical means. The tendons of the anterior muscles were divided, and immediately the point of the foot was brought down to a right angle, the deformity almost completely disappearing.—*Bul. of the Academy.*

BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

BOSTON, JULY 3, 1839.

DR. PALMER'S ADDRESS.

On the 12th of June, the graduating class of the Vermont Medical College, in Woodstock, was addressed by the president, David Palmer, M.D., in a manner to have gained the applause, we apprehend, of all who had the privilege of being within the sound of his voice. If there is any essential fault in the address, it is too short: however, as the great secret of securing the approbation of our fellow men consists in not wearing out their excitability, it may perhaps be an evidence of the president's good judgment and sound discrimination, that he did not exceed twelve duodecimo pages.

Were the whole re-published in our pages, it might be thought that other matters, of a more immediately practical character, had been omitted; and, on the other hand, if we copy only a fragment here and there, the author may consider himself unjustly exhibited by piece-meal. At all events we shall detach a paragraph or two, and hazard the consequences.

"And here allow me to say, that your power of exerting a moral influence for good or for evil, must necessarily be great. If, by your professional skill, your kindness of temper, and the urbanity of your manners, you secure such a standing in the affections of individuals and families, as these qualities seldom fail to secure, you will be placed most advantageously, to infuse either the rank poison of infidelity, or the fragrance of pure and holy affections and belief into the hearts and minds of your employers. The visits and the influence of the clergyman upon the sick are often dreaded. They are too ghostly, and put him in mind of his funeral; but the single-hearted and pure-affectioned physician, who feels the value of the consolations of christianity, is indeed an acquisition in the chambers of the sick. And, to accomplish all the good in his power,

it is by no means necessary that the physician should be ostentatiously moralizing or preaching on every or on *any* occasion. The calm influence of his example, and occasionally a good word fitly spoken, may be productive of great good. *Above all things* you will not at this time of day, either in your more private and confidential intercourse, or by your public influence, attempt to undermine and shake the stability of the christian religion, or darken the faith or weaken the hopes of those who regard it as their only refuge. A certain proportion of your employers, in every community, will be those who cherish the christian's hopes; and if you have *not* a corresponding faith, if you regard those hopes delusive, you can frame no reasonable apology for attempting to dissipate them. The time has gone by, when infidelity was regarded as a proof of deep thinking—of profound research, by anybody."

Young physicians ought to feel obliged to the doctor for reminding them of an important fact, which, unheeded, has turned scores topsy turvy, who were and would have been on the high road to professional eminence, had they eschewed politics.

"With political contests you will do well not to be deeply engaged. As members of a free government, and as eligible to all its places of honor and trust, you are at full liberty to form and maintain your own opinions, of the men and measures of the government. And this you may do, without becoming in the modern, the popular, the *hateful* sense of the term, politicians. Politics, in the modern acceptation of the term, has become a *trade* in which an honest man can hardly engage. The thin pretence of principle, which is held out to allure the simple-hearted followers, in the rank and file of political parties, is either not mentioned, or mentioned with derision by the leaders, among themselves."

Again, the elevated views expressed in another place, are calculated for all meridians, and could not be too perseveringly adhered to in the intercourse of practitioners of the same scientific profession.

"The man, who, when called to consult with *you*, makes a display to attract the notice of the patient, or his friends, or suggests that this, or that, should have been done in season, or *at least* ought to be done now, forfeits your confidence—incurs your contempt. You *may*, perhaps, prudently forbear the expression of what is passing in your mind. It may be better not to quarrel with, but you will always despise and shun him. And how fits the golden rule in this contingency? Why, just as it fits in all other contingencies. What you would have others do or avoid with you, that do or avoid in your intercourse with them; and the consequences will always be right."

Thus far, the institution over which Dr. Palmer presides has been steadily progressing, and at no period of its history could be contemplated with more satisfaction than at the close of the late lecture term.

Maine Lunatic Hospital.—It is understood that the edifice, now in progress at Augusta, will be ready for the reception of patients in the course of the ensuing autumn. The principal building, of granite, is to contain two hundred apartments, besides a room in the attic, eighty feet long by forty in breadth, and fifteen high, designed for a chapel. Strict attention has been paid in the construction to ventilation and warming. On the whole, as the architect has had the advantage of the improvements introduced into all the other insane establishments which have been erected in the country, it is presumed that the Maine hospital will equal, certainly,

if it does not entirely surpass, all others in point of beauty, utility, comfort and convenience.

Journal of Dental Science.—A noble enterprise has been undertaken in New York by Chapin A. Harris, of Baltimore, and Eleazer Parmly, of New York, gentlemen of commanding influence and character, as operative dentists. It is truly a generously devised scientific journal. It consists of 48 octavo pages, beautifully printed, and afforded as cheap as possible. We cordially recommend it to all dentists—a goodly number of whom in the United States have long been our patrons—as entirely worthy of their sustaining power.

Dr. Harlan's Cabinet.—In looking back to page 225, vol. XIX., a notice will be found of the articles constituting Dr. Harlan's very valuable cabinet. The owner, just before leaving for Europe, tried to make a sale in Boston. We learn that a recent fire occurred in Philadelphia, at the Messrs. Wetherill's White Lead Factory, at which the entire cabinet of anatomical preparations for the illustration of comparative anatomy, was destroyed. They were the collection and labor of years, under the eye Dr. Harlan, who is now in Europe, and who has refused a large sum as the price of their purchase.

College of Physicians and Surgeons, Upper Canada.—Some one, unknown to us, has kindly sent the by-laws of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Upper Canada—a most acceptable favor, for which we return many thanks, not knowing before that the institution existed. A principal part of the constitution, together with the essential by-laws, will be introduced into the Medical Almanac, now preparing for the next year. The present officers are: C. Widmer, M.D., President; Lucius O'Brien, M.D., Secretary, resident of Toronto.

Montreal General Hospital.—An interesting quarterly report of the committee of management for the quarter ending April 30th, 1839, is respectfully acknowledged, and we regret not knowing to whom we are indebted for the favor. The expenses were £538 6s. 9d. Remaining patients of the last quarter, 45; admitted during the quarter ending April 30th, 106; discharged cured, 93; discharged for irregular conduct, 1; died, 6; remaining 46. S. C. Sewell, M.D., and Geo. W. Campbell, M.D., attending medical officers. It would be doing us a kindness to have all succeeding reports of this well-conducted hospital sent to the address of the editor, as in the present instance.

Sherman's Truss.—An advertising handbill, of huge dimensions, surmounted by a coarse drawing of the inguinal regions, to which are appended the commendatory testimonials of forty-five distinguished surgeons and physicians, came on the other day; but we like to see things as well as read about them. If the instrument is truly what it is represented to be, it would conduce to the sales of the proprietor to have one for exhibition in the Journal office, where more physicians would see it than in almost any other place.

Catarrhus Autumnalis.—At the late meeting of the Hopkins Medical Association in Hartford, referred to in last week's Journal, Dr. J. Barratt, of Middletown, read a dissertation on *Catarrhus Autumnalis*, with copious notes, &c., and with reports of cases to illustrate this rather rare and troublesome affection. He also furnished notes to show the connection of this disease and the flowering of particular plants named, and these he attempted to show were intimately connected with the disease, if not the *cause* of it. He also read parts of Dr. Elliott's Botanical Lecture on *Catarrhus Æstivus*, or *Hay Fever*, from the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal of June 17th, 1833, Vol. 8th; and demonstrated that the diseases were identical, as much so as difference of climate and flowering time would allow—only with us it was later, appearing about August 14th and lasting one month, or till such plants as he named had passed flowering. His intimate knowledge of British Botany enabled him to hint what plants were most probably concerned in producing the disease in Great Britain. Dr. Barratt may consent to publish, more largely and minutely, his views hereafter upon this interesting subject. Dr. Welch, of Wethersfield, read an interesting dissertation on dysenteria, from which we do not feel ourselves at liberty, for the present, to extract.

Hospital of Macao, China.—The Rev. Peter Parker, M.D., the distinguished operator, whose success in surgery has rarely been equalled in any country, has made a report of the condition of the hospital under his care at Macao, which was opened on the 5th of May, 1838, while some necessary repairs were made on the Canton Hospital with which he has been officially connected, under the auspices of the Medical Missionary Society, ever since he arrived in that country. The Macao hospital is capable of containing two hundred patients. There are nineteen spacious rooms on the second story, and as many on the ground floor—an extensive garden, three wells, and a large front yard. The edifice is of brick, strongly built. Cases will be selected from this report, some of which are quite remarkable in character.

Price of Chirurgical Fellowship in Scotland.—In order to become a fellow of the Edinburgh Royal College of Surgeons, incorporated so lately as 1778, the candidate is required to present an essay upon some surgical subject, which, if approved of, he must print at his own expense and circulate among the fellows. Next, he must undergo three examinations before the College, on anatomy, surgery, chemistry, materia medica, &c., and also on the dissertation which he has written. If he passes these trials to the satisfaction of the institution, he is admitted to a fellowship in full communion, on paying *two hundred and fifty pounds!*

To Correspondents.—The communications on the use of tobacco and on the cause of bronchitis in clergymen, from Dr. Mauran, Dr. Howe, and Dr. E. G., and the paper on scarlatina, were received too late for this number.—Dr. Woodward, of Quincy, Mass., will please accept our thanks for the kine-pock matter, which was taken by himself from the cow last week. As soon as we have had time to test the character of the lymph, his letter will be published.—Dr. Josiah Crosby, of Meredith Bridge, N. H., has laid us under peculiar obligations.—Dr. Haskell's paper will be inserted as soon as we can find room.

Whole number of deaths in Boston for the week ending June 20, 22. Males, 9—females, 13.

Of consumption, 1—inflammation of the bowels, 2—child-bed, 1—infantile, 1—scarlet fever, 5—brain fever, 1—hooping cough, 1—teething, 1—marasmus, 1—croup, 1—old age, 1—salt rheum, 1—lung fever, 1—worms, 1—tumor, 1—stillborn, 4.

BERKSHIRE MEDICAL INSTITUTION.

THE Annual course of Lectures in this Institution will commence the 8th of August, 1838, and continue thirteen weeks.

Theory and Practice of Medicine and Obstetrics, by	H. H. CHILDS, M.D.
Chemistry, Botany, and Natural Philosophy, by	C. DEWEY, M.D.
Pathological Anatomy and Materia Medica, by	ELISHA BARTLETT, M.D.
Anatomy and Physiology, by	ROBERT WATTS, M.D.
Surgery, by	WILLARD PARKER, M.D.

Fee for the course of lectures, $50; fee for those who have already attended two full courses at an incorporated medical school, $10; graduation fee, $18; board, including room-rent and lodging, as at other country institutions. Library fee, according to the number of books taken out.

Fellows of the Massachusetts Medical Society, and others, who have received the degree of Doctor of Medicine, are admitted gratuitously to the lectures.

Degrees are conferred at the commencement and close of the Lecture Term. The pre-requisites for admission to an examination for the Degree of Doctor of Medicine are—three full years' study under a regular practitioner of medicine—attendance on two full courses of medical lectures, in medical institutions regularly established, one of which courses must have been attended at this institution—a dissertable thesis on some subject connected with medical science—an adequate knowledge of the Latin language, and a good moral character.

The examinations will be held in presence of the Trustees, Faculty, and Overseers of the Institution, and of a Delegation from the Medical Society. The thesis must be publicly read and defended. Gentlemen who intend to present themselves as candidates for a degree, are particularly requested to procure full and formal certificates of time and age.

1y 3— *By order of the Faculty,* ROBERT WATTS, Jr., M.D., *Dean.*

THOMPSON'S APPARATUS FOR THE CURE OF PROLAPSUS UTERI, &c.

IN offering his instrument to the faculty, Dr Thompson would call their attention to the following statements, and request all interested to examine the article in the hands of his agents.

Extract of a letter from the late Professor Eberle, to the Hon. H. L. Ellsworth, Commissioner of Patents, &c., dated

Cincinnati, May 11, 1837.—"I have carefully examined the new *Uterine Truss* invented by Dr. Robert Thompson, of Columbus, in this State, and I can confidently declare, that it is unquestionably the most perfect and useful instrument of the kind, that has ever been offered to the public. It differs essentially in its construction, from the Uterine Truss contrived by Dr. Hull, and is, in all respects, a far superior instrument."

See, also, "The Western Journal of Medical and Physical Sciences."

Professor McCleland, of Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, Pa., declared, upon examining the instrument, that "every word of Dr. Eberle's opinion is true." Professors Channing and Hayward, of Boston, expressed like opinions.

Extract of a letter from Prof. Sewall to Prof. Bigelow, dated

Washington, 18th May, 1837.—"Dr. Thompson will be pleased to show you a *Uterine Truss* which he has invented, of very superior structure to anything we have."

Extract of a letter from Prof. Peixotto to Dr. Thompson, dated

Columbus, Jan. 10, 1838.—"Your instrument, it appears to me, is formed on principles more enlarged, than those hitherto recommended for the same end, and mechanically different. I would cheerfully recommend its adoption by our professional brethren generally."

For sale in Boston by Theodore Metcalf, apothecary, No. 33 Tremont Row. Price, $10.

June 19—1y

PRIVATE MEDICAL INSTRUCTION.

THE subscribers are associated for the purpose of giving a complete course of medical instruction. Their pupils will have regular access to the medical and surgical practice of the Massachusetts General Hospital. They will be admitted, also, to the practice of the House of Correction, which constantly presents a large number of important cases, and where opportunities will be afforded for acquiring a practical knowledge of compounding and dispensing medicines. They will be furnished with opportunities for the study of Practical Anatomy, not inferior to any in the country. To the pupils, particularly to those in the last year of their professional studies, facilities will be afforded for acquiring a personal acquaintance with private medical and obstetric practice. Instruction by examinations or lectures will be given in the different branches of medical studies, during the interval between the public lectures of the University. Books, and a room with fire and lights, will be furnished to the students at the expense of the instructors.

GEORGE C. SHATTUCK,
WALTER CHANNING,
JOHN WARE,
GEORGE W. OTIS,
WINSLOW LEWIS, Jr.

Oct. 31—epf

TO PHYSICIANS.

A PHYSICIAN who wishes to relinquish the practice, can hear of one of experience who would be glad to occupy his stand, and who can give the most unexceptionable references as to character, &c., by addressing a line to the editor, post paid.

June 19—3t

THE BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL is published every Wednesday, by D. CLAPP, JR., at 184 Washington St., corner of Franklin St., to whom all communications must be addressed, post paid. It is also published in Monthly Parts, with a printed cover. There are two volumes each year. J. V. C. SMITH, M.D., *Editor.* Price $4.00 a year in advance, $2.50 after three months, or $4.50 if not paid within the year. Two copies to the same address, for $7.00 a year, in advance. Orders from a distance must be accompanied by payment in advance or satisfactory reference. Postage the same as for a newspaper.